

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 SANTIAGO 5054

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: SHUM PDIP PINT PGOV US CI UN
SUBJECT: PINOCHET; ECLA HUNGER STRIKE; HUMAN RIGHTS

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT PINOCHET CALLED ME TO HIS PRIVATE OFFICE AT 10:00 A.M. THIS MORNING. WE MET ALONE. HE COVERED THE ECLA HUNGER STRIKERS, US HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVES AND THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF CHILE. PINOCHET WAS IN A BRISTLING, ANGRY MOOD, WHICH DIMINISHED AS HIS COMPLAINTS WERE REGISTERED. HE CONSIDERS WALDHEIM'S CABLE INSOLENT AND AN INTERFERENCE IN CHILEAN AFFAIRS. HE DOES NOT INTEND TO RESPOND TO THE CABLE DIRECTLY NOR TO INVOLVE THE GOVERNMENT IN WHAT HE CONSIDERS AN ECLA PROBLEM. HE IS NOT HAPPY ABOUT US HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVES, EITHER, BUT THERE MAY BE SOME GIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE ECLA HUNGER STIKERS. PINOCHET ASKED MY WHY I HAD RAISED THE MATTER OF THE ECLA HUNGER STRIKERS WITH PRESIDENTIAL STAFF CHIEF GENERAL COVARRUBIAS. I REPLIED THAT UNDER INSTRUCTIONS I HAD WANTED TO GET TO THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT THE HOPE OF MY GOVERNMENT THAT PRESIDENT PINOCHET'S RESPONSE TO
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UNSYG WALDHEIM'S MESSAGE WOULD BE FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ONGOING US-GOC HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE. PINOCHET EXPLODED. HE SAID THAT WALDHEIM CABLE WAS AN INSOLENT INTERVENTION IN CHILEAN AFFAIRS. CHILE WAS NOT A UN COLONY AND AS PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC HE WOULD NOT BE INSULTED BY WALDHEIM. PINOCHET SAID THAT THE ENTIRE HUNGER STRIKE WAS A

"VOLGAR SHOW" ORGANIZED BY THE COMMUNISTS AND DESIGNED TO EMBARRASS CHILE DURING THE OASGA MEETING. IT WAS OUTRAGEOUS THAT THE UNSYC SHOULD JUMP ON THIS BANDWAGON TO PURSUE HIS DESIRE TO FORCE CHILE TO BE THE ONLY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO ACCEPT A UN HUMAN RIGHTS INVESTIGATING GROUP AND THUS INFRINGE ITS SOVEREIGNTY. HE SAID THAT "THIS UN COMMISSION" (SIC) COULD NOT ENTER CHILE.

3. TURNING TO THE MATTER OF THE HUNGER STRIKERS THEMSELVES, PINOCHET SAID HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT "DEMANDS." THE GOC DID NOT KNOW WHO THESE PEOPLE WERE NOR ABOUT WHOM THEY WERE CONCERNED. THE UN CONTROLLED THE ECLA BUILDING AND IT WAS A UN PROBLEM. NEITHER HE AS PRESIDENT NOR THE GOVERNMENT WOULD GET INVOLVED IN THE MATTER. BEGINNING TODAY, CHILE'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UN WOULD DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM. I REPLIED THAT REGARDLESS OF THE MATTER OF JURISDICTIONS, AS LONG AS THE HUNGER STRIKERS WERE IN ECLA THE GOVERNMENT OF CHILE WOULD BE THE OBJECT OF A DAMAGING PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN. I DID NOT BELIEVE THIS WAS IN CHILE'S INTEREST NOR IN THE INTEREST OF US-CHILE RELATIONS. PINOCHET REPLIED THAT THE ECLA OCCUPATION WAS A SHOW, AND REGARDLESS OF HOW THE GOC REACTS, IT WILL BE THE OBJECT OF A NEGATIVE PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN.

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4. HUMAN RIGHTS. PRESIDENT PINOCHET THEN INITIATED A DISCUSSION OF RECENT US INITIATIVES IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS AREA. (DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER'S DISCUSSION WITH CHILEAN AMBASSADOR CAUAS AND SECRETARY VANCE'S BILATERAL WITH GOC FONMIN CARVAJAL). PINOCHET SAID THAT WHILE IT WAS AN OBVIOUS EXAGGERATION TO SPEAK OF A RUPTURE ("ROMPIMIENTO") IN OUR RELATIONS, USG "DEMANDS" WITH RESPECT TO HOW CHILEANS RAN CHILE AMOUNTED TO A GROSS INTERVENTION IN CHILE'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. CHILE WAS NOT A US COLONY; DUE PROCESS ALREADY EXISTED, THE LIFTING OF THE STATE OF SEIGE WAS A MATTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL DECISION, AND THE FUTURE OF DINA WAS A MATTER FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE GOVERNMENT. I INTERJECTED TO SAY THAT USG VIEWS ON THESE THREE IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS WERE NEITHER DEMANDS NOR INTERVENTION ON OUR PART, BUT A FRANK EXPOSITION OF USG CONCERNS IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS AREA. THE US GOVERNMENT WAS FULLY COMMITTED TO ITS HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AND IN THE INTERESTS OF IMPROVING US-GOC BILATERAL RELATIONS WE WANTED AN OPEN AND FRANK DIALOGUE. PINOCHET RESPONDED THAT EVEN IF HE MET USG DEMANDS IN THESE THREE AREAS, THEN THERE WOULD BE THREE MORE DEMANDS AND THREE MORE

AFTER THAT AND SO ON. HE RECALLED TO ME THE VISITS OF SECRETARIES SIMON AND KISSINGER LAST YEAR AND THE EMPHASIS AT THAT TIME ON POLITICAL PRISONERS. SINCE THEN THE GOC HAD RELEASED ABOUT 4,000 PRISONERS, POLITICAL AND OTHERWISE, AND THE WORLD COMMUNITY HAD BEEN UNABLE TO SUMMON ONE KIND WORD. THIS PROGRESS WAS IGNORED. (COMMENT: PINOCHET IS RIGHT; PROGRESS WAS MADE AND IT WAS IGNORED.)

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5. POLITICAL FUTURE. THE PRESIDENT IMMEDIATELY SHIFTED GEARS TO TALK ABOUT HIS PROJECTION OF CHILE'S POLITICAL FUTURE. HE SAID THAT THE STATE OF SEIGE WOULD BE LIFTED AS SOON AS NEW SECURITY LAWS WERE DRAFTED. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THERE EVENTUALLY WOULD BE A UNICAMERAL LEGISLATURE AND THAT A SIGNIFICANT PORTION THEREOF WOULD BE POPULARLY ELECTED. THESE STEPS WERE IN THE FUTURE. HOW FAR IN THE FUTURE WAS A MATTER FOR HIM AND OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE GOC TO DECIDE AND NOT A MATTER TO BE DICTATED BY EXTERNAL PRESSURES.

6. I REPLIED THAT I WOULD REPORT HIS VIEWS ON THESE SUBJECTS TO WASHINGTON AND THAT WHILE THERE WERE REAL DIFFERENCES, I HOPED THAT THE CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION AND DIALOGUE WOULD REMAIN OPEN. HE URGED ME TO CONTACT PRESIDENTIAL CHIEF OF STAFF COVARRUBIAS WHENEVER I HAD MATTERS FOR HIS PERSONAL ATTENTION.

7. COMMENT: PRESIDENT PINOCHET WAS IN HIGH DUDGEON

AT THE BEGINNING OF OUR MEETING. I HAVE KNOWN HIM
SINCE 1961 AND, AS EXPECTED, HIS ANGER DECREASED AS THE
MEETING PROGRESSED. MY GUESS IS THAT PINOCHET'S
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POSITION ON THE ECLA HUNGER STRIKERS IS VERY HARD
INDEED. RELATIVE MODERATES WITHIN THE GOC MAY
AMELIORATE THIS STAND OVER TIME (AS HAS HAPPENED ON
OTHER ISSUES) BUT FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE IGLESIAS'
REPORTS TO WALDHEIM ARE GOING TO BE VERY PESSIMISTIC.

8. ON THE BROADER ISSUE OF THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE GOC
BY SECRETARY VANCE AND DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER
ON SPECIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS IMPROVEMENTS, I SENSE SOME
GIVE IN PINOCHET'S POSITION. IN EARLY 1976 PINOCHET
AND HIS PERSONAL LIEUTENANTS WERE SAYING TO HELL WITH
THE POLITICAL PRISONERS--THEY WOULD PAY THEIR DEBT.
WITHIN MONTHS ALL WERE RELEASED. AFTER SOME BLUSTER-
ING, WE MAY SEE SOME PROGRESS ON DUE PROCESS, STATE OF
EMERGENCY AND/OR DINA.
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